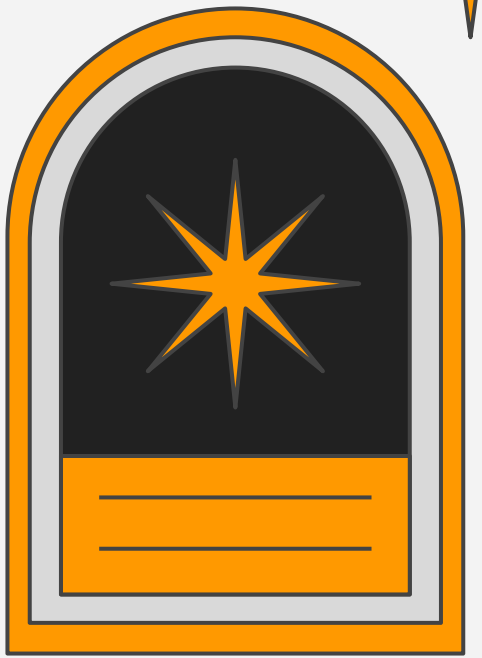


How To Write a Personal Statement

For the 2023 PAC Application Cycle by Anthony Vernon MA/MFA Student/Writing Center Tutor

Pac Application Requirements

- Maximum of 5,300 Characters (with spaces) or about 1 - 1 ½ pages
- Use a standard 12 point font
- Single or double space is institution dependent

What Is a Personal Statement

	Picture	Indication	Story
01	Shows who you are.	Shows your priorities.	Shows your story.
02	Bridges the distance between strangers.	Shows why your priorities matter to you.	Demonstrates self-reflection via storytelling.
03	Looks into the future.	Shows how your priorities have shaped your path and align with the program you are applying to.	Demonstrates where you want your story to take you.

What a Personal Statement is Not

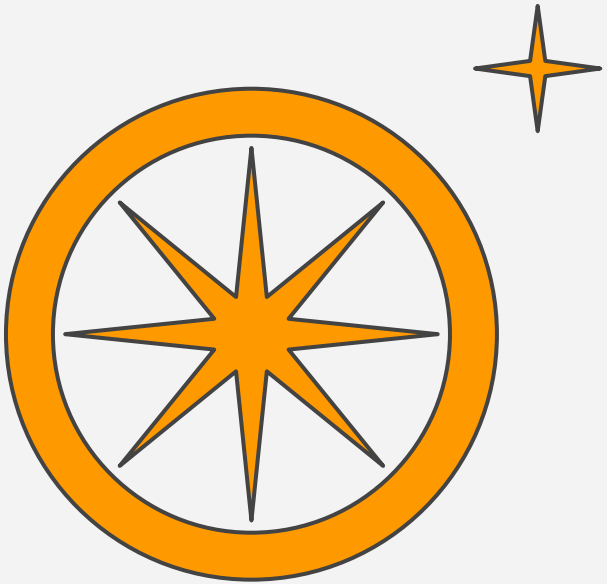
NOT an academic paper
- Does **NOT** interpret data or reflect research
- Uses ‘I’ statements and a narrative form

NOT a resume/CV
- Do **NOT** just list your accomplishments (this is what your resume/CV are for)

NOT a journal entry or diary

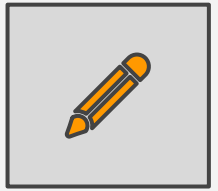
NOT a plea or justification
- Do **NOT** try to guess or write what you think a committee is looking for

What Questions Will A Personal Statement Answer?



- Who am I?
- Who do I want to be?
- What kind of contribution do I want to make?
- How do I want to make a contribution?
- Why did I choose medicine/dentistry as my career?
- Why is the program I am applying to the right program?
- Is the program I am applying to consistent with my studies and activities to date?

Questions To Ask Before Writing



- What is my motivation?
- What made me interested in medicine or dentistry?
- What have I learned about medicine or dentistry?
- Do I have varied medical or dental experience (includes unpaid and volunteer experience)?
- How I have developed and what you have taken from your developments?

Starting To Write Your Personal Statement

Your personal statement is a part of your professional school application and should be carefully composed and edited.

Provide a personal (but not informal) “picture” of yourself.

Present yourself beyond your **GPA** and **MCAT**.

You want to state why you were drawn to your field, including your passion and understanding of said field.

Put in relevant medical or dental experiences that tie into your passion and understanding of your given field.

Writing The Personal Statement Tips

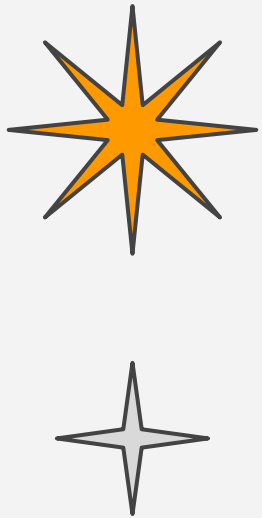
1. Have a plan before writing
2. Talk about what you know (as that is what you will be interviewed on).
3. Be true to yourself.
4. Do not lack the personal part of a personal statement.
5. There is no one set style or model for writing personal statements.

Writing The Personal Statement Pitfalls

1. Do **NOT** say you were “born” to be a doctor or dentist
2. Do **NOT** say you are special
3. Do **NOT** name drop (let alone overly celebrate whoever you would name drop)
4. Do **NOT** include future contributions or accomplishments
5. Do **NOT** talk about the blemishes on your record
6. Do **NOT** be surface level or generic in your writing

5 Steps for Writing Your Personal Statement

STEP 1: Organize	Confirm Instructions	Update Your Resume
STEP 2: Self-Reflect	Make Use of Prompts	Summarize
STEP 3: Brainstorm	Formulate Your Focus	Do Not Just Brainstorm Once
STEP 4: Communicate	Stay On Topic & Don't Overshare	Answer "So-what's" & "Now what's"
STEP 5: Edit	Get Feedback	Check For Grammar & Spelling Errors



Helpful Resources

https://universitycollege.okstate.edu/preprofessional/all_explore_to_apply/admission_process/personal_statements/personal_statements_index.html (for both future dental and medical students)

https://www.shemmassianconsulting.com/blog/dental-school-personal-statement (for future dental students)

https://www.healthdiversity.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/SNMAPersonalStatementsvol2_2_.pdf (for future medical students)

Full applications are due by **January 6th**